

Situation Report 37 - LEBANON RESPONSE – 12 September 2006

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

SG's tour of region triggers positive outcome

The UN Secretary-General's multi-nation tour of Europe and the Middle East proved a catalyst to helping end the Israeli blockade and increasing UNIFIL troop levels.

Israeli blockade lifted

The Israeli air, sea and land blockade is now lifted, but with a heavy toll on Lebanon economy and it will take some weeks before a return to normalcy.

Lebanon Early Recovery Fund being finalized

In response to a request by the Lebanese Minister of Finance, UNDP has developed draft Terms of Reference for the Lebanon Early Recovery Fund (LERF) allowing donors to pool resources and provide quick funding to the Government of Lebanon's early recovery projects and programmes.

SITUATION OVERVIEW

2. UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan visited Lebanon 28 – 29 August, as part of an eleven-country tour, including Belgium, Switzerland, Lebanon, Israel, oPt, Jordan, Syria, Iran, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Turkey and Spain. During his 48 hour mission to Lebanon he met with government authorities to discuss a range of issues related to the aftermath of the conflict including on-going humanitarian needs. The mission was widely seen as being crucial to building support for Security Council resolution 1701 and hastening the end of the Israeli blockade of Lebanon.

Implications of the Lifting of the Israeli Blockade

3. Since the complete lifting of the Israeli blockade, air traffic is quickly resuming. By 11 September, they were just 27 per cent below pre-conflict levels. During the blockade, the number of passengers arriving and departing from Beirut had declined by 92 per cent and the total number of flights by some 90 per cent. Similarly, airfreight dropped by 95 per cent over the period.

4. Despite the resumption of air traffic, the negative impact on tourism - a key sector in the Lebanese economy - will continue to be felt in the coming months as many tourists have cancelled holidays during the Ramadan and Christmas period.

5. The Port of Beirut does not expect full import and export activity to resume for another three or four months. One reason for this is the financial problems manufacturers face in paying for VAT on imported goods. A second is the sharp fall in the purchasing power of consumers following the conflict, which will dampen demand for imported goods, particularly food. Exports are also expected to lag as domestic manufacturing stalled during the conflict and will not recover immediately.

6. The blockade took its toll on manufacturers who, dependent on imported raw materials, paid high demurrage costs on inputs waiting at foreign ports to enter Lebanon. They also were faced with high interest rate payments on bank loans and higher transportation costs. The blockade also prevented some 8,000 fishermen from taking their boats to sea, and on farmers who found imported pesticides and seeds in short supply or more expensive.

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- This situation report, together with additional information on the current crisis is also available on <http://www.reliefweb.int>. As your tool for timely information sharing, please encourage submissions of documents and maps by email to submit@reliefweb.int.
- Information can be shared by humanitarian practitioners directly involved in the response to the crisis by utilizing the **virtual Humanitarian Information Centre** Website www.humanitarianinfo.org/lebanon Organizations can post Who What Where Information and contact details, as well as any other pertinent information at the site by submitting to vhic@un.org

An Overview of the Health Situation

7. One-fourth of health facilities in conflict hit areas surveyed during a recent joint Government of Lebanon/World Health Organization (WHO) assessment are not functioning due to physical damage, lack of staff or lack of accessibility. Water and fuel shortages also remain serious concerns.

8. Twenty-six per cent of the health facilities assessed in the survey are not functioning, with a total of 12 buildings completely destroyed and 38 severely damaged, particularly in Bint Jbeil, Majayoun, Nabatiye and the southern suburbs of Beirut.

9. Only one-third of health facilities have clean drinking water, while only one in four are linked to the general sewage system or to a power supply. Thirty-one per cent of facilities are using generators, but less than one in five has enough fuel to run them.

10. In health care, maternal and child care services have suffered the most. Just 1 in 4 primary health care facilities can provide antenatal care; just 1 in 10 can support clean delivery and emergency obstetric care. Only 1/3 of health facilities are able to preserve vaccines, and just 13 per cent can provide mental health services. Normally, all of the surveyed facilities are able to provide all these services.

11. A shortage of health workers also exists, including general practitioners, obstetric and surgical specialists, nurses, laboratory technicians, pharmacists, internists and anesthesiologists.

IDP Situation

12. According to UNHCR, the current number of IDPs still residing in schools is 794, and the number of those staying with host families and at mosques and churches is approximately 200,000.

13. Special Rapporteurs of the Human Rights Council, Paul Hunt (Special Rapporteur on the Right to Health), Walter Kaelin (Representative of the Secretary-General on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced People), Miloon Kothari (Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing) and Philip Alston, (Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions) visited Lebanon from 07 to 10 September, including a trip to south Lebanon. The Special Rapporteurs' report will be presented to the Human Rights Council at its next session which opens in Geneva on 18 September 2006. A fifth Special Rapporteur, Jean Ziegler, on food is expected this week.

14. On 7 September, an accidental fire in a warehouse at the Beirut Port, where UNHCR stores relief goods, caused approximately US\$700,000 in damage to UNHCR supplies. Fortunately, large amounts of relief supplies had already been shipped to southern Lebanon to meet immediate needs. se itself.



Children in front of rubble in Marwahin south Lebanon

(Photo: IRIN)

HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

UXO and Demining Activities

Casualties from UXOs -- 14 August to 12 September

	Injured	Killed	Total
Child (Male)	15	2	17
Child (Female)	4	0	4
Adult (Male)	35	12	47
Adult (Female)	5	0	5
TOTAL	59	14	73

15. 464 individual cluster bomb strike locations have been confirmed and recorded in south Lebanon as of 12 September 2006, according to the UN Mine Action Coordination Centre (UNMACC). An estimated 8,500 pieces of ordnance (not including tens-of -thousand of cluster bomb sub-munitions) remain unexploded.

16. As of 12 September, 73 people have been killed or injured since 14 August, according to casualty figures from the National De-mining Office (NDO). All deaths

and injuries -- with the exception of five injuries -- are attributable to cluster bombs.

17. Disposal of unexploded ordnance is being conducted by specialized units from the Lebanese Army and UNIFIL, and by organizations such as Mines Advisory Group, BACTEC (a commercial company) and the Swedish Rescue Services Agency. Some of these agencies have been contracted by the United Nations to enhance the existing capacity within the country. Collectively, these organizations have disposed of nearly 14,000 individual unexploded cluster sub-munitions and hundreds of other items of unexploded ordnance. They are concentrating on high risk areas such as schools and key roadways, but will soon broaden out activities to farming land and other areas.

18. UNICEF, in coordination with the National Steering Committee for Mine Risk Education and the National De-mining Office (NDO), has launched a mass media and education campaign – including production and distribution of 100,000 flyers, 10,000 posters and TV and radio spots to alert the Lebanese people and, particularly children and returnees, of the dangers of unexploded ordnance and mines. In addition, the campaign aims to teach safe behavior by telling people not to come close or touch possible unexploded ordnance and to report them to the nearest military base, internal security forces, or the National De-mining Office.

Cluster Update

19. **Education** -- the key priority for the cluster, working with the Ministry of Education, is to ensure that the 400,000 pre- and primary school-aged children are able to return to school. The national “Back to School” initiative, supported by UNICEF and various NGOs, aims to get as many children as possible back in the classroom by 16 October.

20. Cleaning and disinfection of schools used as temporary shelters for IDPs has been a primary task. Sanitary works in 86 school premises in Beirut has commenced and the task of repairing schools that suffered minor damage in the conflict is being accelerated. In order for such schools to be ready, they also will receive priority attention in the on-going task of removing unexploded munitions.

21. **Food** -- distributions continue in the South in Tyre, Bent Jbail and Marjaayoun as well as in Saida, Nabatiye, Jezzine and Hasbaiya and in the Southern Suburbs of Beirut. The main food pipelines are from ICRC, WFP and the Higher Relief Commission with some

smaller pipelines for the NGO community. The preliminary results from the WFP food security assessment will be finalised during the week 11- 15 September. The Food security cluster has recently been joined by a representative from FAO. During September FAO will be conduct a damage and needs assessment mission in the agriculture, forestry and fishery sectors. The Food Security Cluster is expected to remain active until the end of October.

22. **Water and sanitation** -- activities are focused on the provision of bottled and tankered water to villages in need in the South and the repair of water systems in the South and the Southern suburbs of Beirut. It is probable that water trucking will be required in some areas for at least two more months.

23. Cluster members are coordinating with Water Authorities on repair of water systems damaged during the conflict. Several agencies are providing generators, pumping equipment, pipes, spare parts, fuel and treatment chemicals. The cluster coordinators have compiled a spreadsheet and map indicating the activities of agencies working in water and sanitation. The cluster coordinators are also working with the water authorities to compile a comprehensive priority list that with details of significant gaps in coverage. This will help to improve targeting.

24. **Health** -- The provision of primary health care continues to be met. A large range of international and local NGO are providing medical assistance primarily with the use of mobile clinics. WHO continues developing, in conjunction with the Ministry of Health, a public health plan. The risk of a communicable disease outbreak still exists, particularly if communities are drinking from contaminated water sources. A concern of the health cluster is that only approximately 20 per cent of health care is run by the government, therefore attention needs to be focused upon the non-public sector. No need exists for the import of additional medicines as the supply is adequate.

25. **Shelter** -- With the onset of winter, the priorities of the cluster are the provision of non-food item such as mattresses, blankets, heating, fuel, etc., so beneficiaries have a means of ensuring one warm room in their premises for the coming winter.

26. Regarding host families, the cluster is focusing on the provision of additional non-food items and, where possible, financial assistance, to make it possible for such families to continue housing displaced families.

27. On reconstruction assistance, the cluster is focusing on the delivery of construction materials for repairing partially-damaged houses, while taking into account socially-vulnerable persons in each location. UNHCR will be providing repair kits as well. A community-based approach is being adopted for the repair of partially- or severely-damaged but structurally safe houses by using the workforce available within the community.

28. The Lebanese government has been exploring the use of prefabricated shelters in some areas. Thus far, Saudi Arabia has stepped forward with an offer of fifty such structures. There are some questions regarding how quickly prefabricated houses could be delivered, their limited lifespan, their environmental impact and whether they would be insulated or not.

29. **Protection** -- meetings are now co-chaired by a representative from the Ministry of Social Affairs and UNHCR. An increasing number of Lebanese NGOs, particularly women's NGOs working in the South, are attending the meetings. The two issues that were identified as requiring specific and immediate attention are UXO and mine awareness and child-friendly spaces and psycho-social care.

Environment

30. The Oil Spill Operations and Coordination Centre (OSOCC) of the Ministry of Environment reports that its aerial surveillance flights carried out in late August, with the assistance of UNIFIL and the Canadian Government revealed no need for off shore oil clean up operations.

31. A temporary storage facility for waste oil and sludge has been established and a temporary site is being identified for waste that is covered in oil, including debris, booms, used overalls, etc.

32. With assistance of foreign experts NGOs and volunteers, assisted with specialized equipment clean-up is underway at Byblos Port and Byblos sur Mer, Fishermen's Wharf, the Movenpick Marina, Ramlet el Baida beach and around the power plant at Jiyyeh, the site of massive fuel oil leak and one of the most polluted sites.

UNIFIL

33. UNIFIL force level is now 3,500 and hopefully will reach 5,000 by the end of the week, leading to a full withdrawal of IDF forces from Lebanon

34. UNIFIL is conducting patrols with electrical repair teams, which are working close to IDF positions, to

reassure them. In addition, UNIFIL Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) teams are clearing UXOs for electrical repair teams.

35. UNIFIL is also planning to commence with Quick Impact Projects (QIPS).

EARLY RECOVERY PROGRAMME

36. In response to a request by the Lebanese Minister of Finance, UNDP has developed draft Terms of Reference for the Lebanon Early Recovery Fund (LERF). The purpose of the LERF is to allow donors to pool resources and provide quick funding to the Government of Lebanon's early recovery projects and programmes. Key elements of the LERF include:

37. **Timeframe:** Projects need to be executed within six months, the timeframe of the national early recovery process.

38. **Governance:** The LERF will be governed by a Steering Committee comprising a Chair designated by the Government, three to five members elected by contributing donors, the UN Resident Coordinator and an NGO representative. The Steering Committee will provide strategic guidance and make final decisions on fund allocation.

39. **Project eligibility:**

In order to be eligible for approval projects must be:

- part of the priority programme of the Government's early recovery activities
- implemented as much as possible through Lebanese implementation partners
- funded and implemented with special attention being paid to transparency and accountability

40. **Project Approval process**

Early recovery clusters, under the leadership of the different line ministries, will manage the development of proposals eligible for submission to the Steering Committee. Funds will also be made available to NGOs through UN agencies.

41. **Contributions:**

Contributions are acceptable from donors, international organizations and NGOs and can be made as un-earmarked contributions or earmarked contributions by cluster and/or by UN agency or NGO. Reports will be shared with all LERF stakeholders and posted on a dedicated website.